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# Jaksec Keeps Information to Warfighters Flowing

Center for Homeland Defense and Security

Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California

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Ensuring communications networks function in the face of adversity is critical to a mission, whether it is providing information to a warfighter in the field or a decision-maker in an office.

Colonel Gregory Jaksec's job is to ensure that the military's information consumers are able to obtain instant and assured information from the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Defense Information System Network (DISN).

Jaksec was promoted to colonel in April and will begin a new assignment June 10 as commander of the DISA Command Center at Fort Meade, Maryland. He is a 2006 graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS).



"My team and I will conduct network operations for global- and continental-based enterprise computing services and data transport networks in support of DOD and other federal agencies," Jaksec said. "That entails ensuring DISA's customer base receives everything from real-time data transport to network assurance services that protect data and information at various network layers."

DISA is a combat support agency which oversees computer network operations for the military in direct support of joint warfighters, national leaders, and other mission and coalition partners across the full spectrum of operations, according to its website.

"I believe our main effort is to provide assured information for our customers, primarily the warfighters who require reliable communications at the edge of our networks," he said. "A secure network is paramount as we deal with adversaries who want our knowledge."

The job involves using skills that are exemplary of a CHDS education. Concepts taught in the Critical Infrastructure Protection course are particularly beneficial, he said, pointing to cascading incidents that can be generated from various network interdependencies. Other courses are applicable as well, Jaksec noted.

"The same architectural concepts that apply to a terror network in NPS Associate Professor Dave Tucker's class can also be applied to a communications network," Jaksec observed. "Critical nodes require redundancy and operations have to be transparent to the end users."

There are also relations with private-sector telecommunications vendors that support communications infrastructure for the military.

"It's a specifically detailed vendor-customer relationship where if networks are down, there could be an impact on our ability to provide services," Jaksec noted.

A critical homeland security venture in which DISA is currently involved is supporting the National Guard Bureau's disaster response in the midwestern and southeastern United States, where flooding and tornadoes have caused widespread devastation. DISA's role is to ensure backbone communications links are available to support the National Guard's response operations.

A CHDS education reinforced his expertise for some of those duties, he noted.

"I will always consider myself privileged to have participated in NPS/CHDS program," he said. "The program provided the right tool set and enabled me to assess my knowledge of the military's industrial base. It also provided me with a clear understanding and application of risk analysis process."

Moreover, the CHDS experience inspired him to conduct his own research in technical and policy areas that enable him to provide managerial depth to his career.

"Continuing education I believe has to be part of an individual's professional development portfolio," Jaksec noted. "The curriculum and the cadre at CHDS provided me with the knowledge and the confidence to take aim at problems at the strategic level as opposed to just focusing at the tactical level."

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